

ABSTRACT

A mechanized unit that places a predetermined and adjustable depth of a selected bedding material on the bottom of a trench in the ground, then places on the bed a continuous length of a utility or utilities having a predetermined spatial relationship with each other and then encases the utility or utilities with additional select material to a predetermined and adjustable depth of cover in a continuous operation. The unit has a single hopper that receives and contains the material that is used both to form the bed and also to encase the one or more utilities laid on the bed. The hopper conveys material in the direction of movement of the unit and the material is dispensed from the conveyor into the trench to form the bed. An adjustable height blade is provided which both sets the bed height and also smoothes the bed upper surface. As the unit moves, the utility or utilities are laid on the bed upper surface. Thereafter, material is dispensed from the bottom of the hopper on top of and around the utility or utilities to encase them. An adjustable height blade is also provided to set the height of the encasement and also to smooth out its upper surface.